

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 30415 01 OF 02 171835Z
ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 USIA-06
ERDA-05 TRSE-00 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-05 EA-10 (ISO) W
-----071394 180149Z /47

R 171913Z OCT 77
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0418
INFO AMEMBASSY BERN
USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 30415

EXCON

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: ESTC, COCOM, FR, CH, SZ
SUBJ: FRENCH SALE OF SWISS CINETHEODOLITES TO CHINA -
IL 1502

REFS: A. STATE 235632; B. PARIS 05985

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IN MEETING WITH MFA DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS, FROMENT-MEURICE, ECON/ COMM MIN STATED THAT USG HAS INFORMATION FRENCH FIRM IS PLANNING TO SUPPLY SEVERAL ADDITIONAL CINETHEODOLITES TO PRC WHICH COULD USE THEM IN DEVELOPMENT OF ICBM'S. FROMENT-MEURICE EXPLAINED FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD NO INFORMATION RE ALLEGED SALE AND APPEARED SURPRISED AT OUR REFERENCE TO ICBM'S. HE WAS NONCOMMITTAL ABOUT PROVIDING USG WITH ANY FURTHER RESPONSE TO OUR APPROACH ALTHOUGH WE MADE CLEAR WE EXPECT ONE. FROMENT-MEURICE INQUIRED WHETHER USG HAS ANY NEW INFORMATION REGARDING PRC USE OF THE THREE CINETHEODOLITES ALREADY SUPPLIED. ACTION REQUESTED: DEPARTMENT REQUESTED TO FURNISH UPDATED INFORMATION ON THIS SUBJECT THAT COULD BE GIVEN TO FROMENT-MEURICE, THUS PROVIDING ANOTHER OCCASION FOR
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 PARIS 30415 01 OF 02 171835Z

EMBASSY TO RAISE SECOND SALE WITH HIM, IF NECESSARY.
END SUMMARY.

2. TO CARRY OUT INSTRUCTIONS IN REF A, EMBASSY ECON/ COMM MINISTER, ACCOMPANIED BY U.S. DEL TO COCOM, MET WITH FROMENT-MEURICE, DIRECTOR, ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS, MFA, ON OCTOBER 14. THE FRENCH COCOM DELEGATE

WAS ALSO PRESENT. (AT REQUEST OF MFA, EMBASSY HAD PREVIOUSLY EXPLAINED WHY MEETING WAS BEING REQUESTED AND THEREFORE FROMENT-MEURICE WAS AWARE IN ADVANCE THAT ANOTHER SALE OF CINETHEODOLITES TO CHINA WOULD BE DISCUSSED.)

3. ECON/COMM MINISTER FIRST NOTED THAT THE AMBASSADOR HAD REQUESTED HE CARRY OUT THE INSTRUCTION PERSONALLY WITH FROMENT-MEURICE IN VIEW OF LATTER'S PREVIOUS INVOLVEMENT WITH SUBJECT. WE POINTED OUT THAT IN MARCH OF THIS YEAR, EMBASSY HAD APPROACHED FROMENT-MEURICE REGARDING THE DIVERSION OF THREE CINETHEODOLITES WHICH HAD BEEN SOLD BY FRENCH FIRM TO CHINA. WE SAID THAT BECAUSE CINETHEODOLITES CAN BE EMPLOYED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MISSILES, USG HAD HOPED AT TIME OF THIS EARLIER APPROACH THAT THERE WOULD BE NO FURTHER SALES OF THIS TYPE OF EQUIPMENT TO CHINA. THE USG HAD NOW OBTAINED WHAT IT CONSIDERED TO BE RELIABLE INFORMATION INDICATING THAT NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE SALE OF SEVERAL (PROBABLY THREE) CINETHEODOLITES BETWEEN THE FRENCH FIRM SIDETEL AND THE PRC ARE IN AN ADVANCED STAGE.

4. ECON/COMM MINISTER EXPLAINED THAT THE USG WAS RAISING THIS NEW SALE BECAUSE OF ITS CONCERN FOR COCOM RULES AND, ESPECIALLY AT THIS TIME, BECAUSE THE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PARIS 30415 01 OF 02 171835Z

CONFIDENTIAL

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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 30415 02 OF 02 171825Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 30415

EXCON

CINETHEODOLITES IN QUESTION ARE UNIQUELY SUITED FOR TRACKING SATELLITES AND OFFENSIVE MISSILES, INCLUDING ICBM'S. THE U.S. IS CONCERNED THAT THESE CINETHEODOLITES COULD ASSIST PRC IN ITS PRESENT PROGRAM TO DEVELOP AN ICBM CAPABLE OF REACHING WESTERN EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA.

5. WE EXPLAINED THAT SINCE CINETHEODOLITES IN QUESTION ARE BUILT IN SWITZERLAND, USG WILL ALSO BE RAISING SAME ISSUE WITH SWISS GOVERNMENT. MYERSON INQUIRED WHETHER FRENCH GOVERNMENT COULD PROVIDE ANY INFORMATION IT OBTAINS REGARDING THIS MATTER.

6. FROMENT-MEURICE RESPONDED THAT, IN EARLIER APPROACH, HE BELIEVED EMBASSY HAD NOT MENTIONED THAT CINETHEODOLITES COULD BE USED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MISSILES, BUT HAD NOTED ONLY THAT THEY HAD MILITARY PURPOSES. FROMENT-MEURICE SAID THAT HE HAD ALREADY CHECKED AND HAD FOUND THAT FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD NO INFORMATION ABOUT A SECOND SALE. HE ASKED IF USG HAD ANY CURRENT INFORMATION AS TO HOW CHINESE WERE EMPLOYING THE THREE CINETHEODOLITES PREVIOUSLY SUPPLIED, AND SAID HE WOULD CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PARIS 30415 02 OF 02 171825Z

VERY MUCH LIKE TO RECEIVE IT.

7. WE SAID WE WOULD SEE WHETHER THERE WAS ANY INFORMATION ON THIS SUBJECT WHICH WE COULD PASS TO FOREIGN MINISTRY. IN THIS CONNECTION -- SINCE FROMENT-MEURICE HAD NOT BEEN FORTHCOMING EARLIER IN THE TALK -- ECON/ COMM MINISTER AGAIN EXPRESSED HOPE THAT FOREIGN MINISTRY COULD INFORM EMBASSY OF ANY INFORMATION IT DEVELOPS REGARDING SECOND SALE AND ASKED WHAT FRENCH GOVERNMENT COULD DO TO PREVENT SALE. FROMENT-MEURICE REPLIED THAT HE "TOOK NOTE OF OUR DEMARCHE" AND REFUSED TO BE DRAWN OUT FURTHER ON THE SPOT.

8. COMMENT: EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING ANY UPDATED INFORMATION AVAILABLE REGARDING PRC USE OF FIRST THREE CINETHEODOLITES WHICH COULD BE PASSED ON TO FROMENT-MEURICE. PROVIDING SUCH INFORMATION TO HIM WOULD BE USEFUL ON ITS OWN MERITS AND WOULD GIVE ANOTHER OCCASION TO RAISE THIS SECOND SALE IF FOREIGN MINISTRY DOES NOT COME BACK TO EMBASSY ON ITS OWN. HARTMAN

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